

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 149850

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, IS, US

SUBJECT: PRESS SPOKESMAN'S JUNE 27 STATEMENT

1. YOU WILL HAVE RECEIVED BY SEPTTEL TEXT OF PRESS SPOKESMAN'S JUNE 27 RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT SENATOR JAVITS'S STATEMENT CRITICIZING ADMINISTRATION'S MIDDLE EAST POLICY. FOR YOUR BACKGROUND, THE FOLLOWING MAY BE HELPFUL.

2. A NUMBER OF CORRESPONDENTS, PARTICULARLY ISRAELI CORRESPONDENTS, INTERPRETED DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S COMMENT AS BACKING AWAY FROM PRESIDENT'S EARLIER POSITION ON THE NATURE OF PEACE. WE HAVE BEEN BUSILY MAKING CLEAR TO ALL AND SUNDRY THAT SPOKESMAN'S COMMENTS WERE AN AFFIRMATION OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY AND NEITHER ADDED TO NOR SUBTRACTED ONE IOTA FROM ANY ELEMENTS OF THAT POLICY AS PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED, MOST RECENTLY IN VICE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN MAKING CLEAR THAT THIS WAS NOT
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A "STATEMENT" BY THE SPOKESMAN BUT A RESPONSE PREPARED IN ANTICIPATION OF QUESTIONS FOLLOWING STATEMENTS LAST WEEK IN ISRAEL (E.G., BY DAYAN TO FOREIGN MINISTRY PERSONNEL) AND JAVITS' SPEECH.

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES AS TO WHETHER THIS IS NOT FIRST TIME WE HAVE EXPLICITLY REFERRED TO NEED FOR WITHDRAWAL ON

WEST BANK, WE ARE REPLYING THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS INTERPRETED RESOLUTION 242 AS APPLYING TO ALL FRONTS AND REASON FOR BEING EXPLICIT THIS TIME IS THAT RECENT ISRAELI STATEMENTS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT WEST BANK WOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM AREAS WHERE WITHDRAWAL WAS OPEN TO NEGOTIATION.

4. YOU WILL ALSO BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING RABBI SCHINDLER TOLD US IN MEETING WITH SECRETARY TODAY THAT, IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES ABOUT "TERRIBLE" STATEMENT BY DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN, HE HAD CHARACTERIZED LATTER AS "MEASURED REACTION" TO JAVITS' SPEECH. WE HAD SIMILAR COMMENT FROM HYMAN BOOKBINDER OF AJC, WHO CALLED IN GREAT CONCERN THAT SOME CORRESPONDENTS WERE INTERPRETING PRESS SPOKESMAN'S MAMKS AS SAYING THAT, IF BEGIN HAD NOTHING MORE TO OFFER, HE NEED NOT COME TO WASHINGTON. MARVIN KALB TOOK THIS LINE ON CBS EVENING NEWS, AND BRZEZINSKI IMMEDIATELY CALLED DINITZ TO SAY THAT SUCH AN INTERPRETATION WAS NONSENSE AND MR. BEGIN IS OF COURSE MOST WELCOME IN WASHINGTON.

5. I AM CERTAIN YOU CAN PUT ALL OF THIS IN PERSPECTIVE IN YOUR TALKS THERE. WE WILL BE SENDING YOU TOMORROW FULL REPORT OF SECRETARY'S MEETING TODAY WITH DINITZ AND PERHAPS YOU CAN SEEK OCCASION TO REVIEW THE RECORD WITH BEGIN OR OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS AND USE THIS
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OPPORTUNITY TO CALM DOWN ANY OVERREACTION. DINITZ, INCIDENTLY, DID NOT EVEN REFER TO DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S COMMENTS DURING HIS MEETING WITH SECRETARY. VANCE

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